

SOME NEW BOOKS.

A Notable Treatise Concerning Ivory and Elephants.

A remarkable repertory of most varied information regarding ivory and the sources from which it is obtained, a treasure house of interesting facts that are not to be found in formal treatises, gathered from all kinds of authoritative sources has been compiled by Dr. George Edmunds, King in *Ivory and the Elephant* (Doubleday, Page & Co.), a handsome illustrated quarto volume. He tells of ivory as a material in art in every land and period, then turns to the manner in which it is treated in industry and in the arts and gives details on the explaining the ivory trade and its importance and value, pointing even on the traffic of elephants for menageries and other purposes. In brief he has gathered together an astonishing mass of material regarding ivory and everything related to it, however remote from books and from the men who know the about each subject, leaving out nothing that may interest an amateur how trivial it may seem; a perfect encyclopedic of ivory.

The author begins with the aspect of ivory which first engages the attention, its embodiment in the arts and above all in sculpture or carvings. It appears in the very earliest essays in art made by primitive man that have come down to us, as for instance the etching of a mammoth on a piece of bone, contemporaneous with some human contemporaries of the extinct creature. The few specimens of this earliest art that have been discovered are all shown in pictures.

With Dr. King describes what ivory carvings survive from ancient civilizations, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and the other Eastern lands that modern excavators have brought to light. It appears in the very earliest essays in art made by primitive man that have come down to us, as for instance the etching of a mammoth on a piece of bone, contemporaneous with some human contemporaries of the extinct creature. The few specimens of this earliest art that have been discovered are all shown in pictures.

In the survey of later art in Europe Dr. King naturally discusses hises according to countries, the peoples behind the work of the Carthaginians and the Byzantine carvers and his book is full of the names of schools and artists of the Middle Ages, he touches on all the countries that provided carvings. Various various other Italian towns, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands. The credit for the revival of the art in France he attributes to the painter Grévin, while the existence of a modern school of carvers in Belgium, which works on the ivory from the Congo is not generally known. Dr. King gives a long list of the artists and their principal works. He tells also of other art work in which ivory is employed such as miniature painting and combinations with other materials.

The chapter on the carvings of the Orient is fascinating. To most Americans of the second world is associated with China or India, for the best carvings they have seen were brought home by sailors, chessmen, little idols, paxos, curious pincers. Dr. King tells of the many uses to which it is put in India, of the pieces where the most artistic work is produced and of the high quality of even the commercial product. He tells of the carvers of Burma and of Ceylon of those of China and Japan. Notable works of art are described minutely, many are shown in illustration and still more are brought to the reader's attention which may be seen in accessible public museums in Paris, London and the United States, or which are in famous American collections. A curiosity is the nude figure of a Chinese woman, which was used for medical purposes. As no man might see or speak to the Chinese lady of quality when she was sick she was placed behind a curtain, the doctor approached her with this figure in his hand and she poked her finger through the curtain and touched the figure in the spot where she felt a pain. Ivory was or is carved articles in other places also, in India, where fossil deposits are found in various parts of the globe, in America, Mexico, in Spain and in Tibet and in crude form by the Eskimos. The author does not forget the "serpent-shaw" work on whale and walrus teeth, the "whalebone" work on the smooth faces of the leviathans.

The Leatherwood God.
One difference between the literary craftsman and the literary artist is that after a long period of years, during which he has steadily produced book after book, people usually know just about what to expect from the craftsman, however capable, whereas they are never able to divine how great a surprise, how startling a departure from accepted methods, the true artist may suddenly achieve. This thought is impressed upon the reader of Willard Dix's Howells' new novel, *The Leatherwood God* (The Century Company), which recalls an almost forgotten chapter in the history of post-war life in Ohio, nearly twenty years ago, when a religious pretender unexpectedly appeared at the close of camp meeting, suddenly assuming such sway in the backwoods community that a multitude of "Believers" were glad to welcome him to his little cabin in the woods.

In that region of hardy frontiersmen's children there were not a few who declined to accept the mountain-bible of the leatherwood god and to follow the law of the Devil, who was often considered the greater of the two.

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